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THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

SEX ROLE STEREOTYPING IN ELEMENTARY BASAL READERS

by

ELIZABETH JANE LEPPARD

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND

RESEARCH IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS

FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF EDUCATION

IN COUNSELLING PSYCHOLOGY

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY

EDMONTON, ALBERTA

FALL, 1990

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The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research, for acceptance, a thesis entitled SEX ROLE STEREOTYPING IN ELEMENTARY BASAL READERS submitted by ELIZABETH LEPPARD in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of MASTER OF EDUCATION IN COUNSELLING PSYCHOLOGY.

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Date June 22 1990

Dedication

To Stephen, whose continuous encouragement helped me through this project, and whose never-ending love, expressiveness and laughter make my life a joy.

Abstract

Thirty-seven basal readers for grades one to six, representing two series from each of Nelson and Holt, Rinehart and Winston, were analyzed for evidence of unequal and stereotypical representation of the sexes. One "old" (1971-1977) and one "recent" (1984-1988) series from each publisher was examined to account for changes across time. The examination included counts of main characters, images, careers and role behavior portrayed. The results revealed that overall the content of the analyzed readers demonstrated unequal and stereotypical representation of females and males. As hypothesized, analyses of variance indicated a significant increase in female main characters and images in the recent series as compared to the old series. No significant difference was found between the old and recent series for the career count. The recent Nelson series contained a greater proportion of female main characters and images than it did males, however, this concern for a balanced representation of the sexes did not extend into the career role category where the proportion of female careers was about the same in both recent and older series. The findings overall are congruent with previous research, with some inconsistencies noted. It was concluded that some major basal reading series used in Alberta depict the sexes in an unequal and unrealistic manner. Publishers appear to be making attempts to present a more equal portrayal of male and female main characters and images in their recent editions. It was recommended that future research, in addition to a focus upon males versus females, investigate the "Other" and "Neutral" categories more thoroughly. It was also suggested that future studies statistically analyze results gathered from a character analysis of old and recent series to determine if an equalization trend is significant here.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

An important topic of research in children's literature over the past fifteen years has been sexism -- "discrimination on the basis of gender" (Tibbetts, 1979a, p.34). According to social learning theory, textbooks present role models with which children identify (Bandura & Bussey, 1984). Bandura believes the process of modeling is important in the transference of sex role information and consequently in the child's sex role development. Other researchers have reported that textbooks are influential in shaping attitudes about self, career options, ethnic group and society's sex role expectations (Britton, Lumpkin & Britton, 1984; Bordelon, 1985; Tibbetts, 1979b).

As one recognized category of "textbook", basal readers first emerged in the 1920's and were at once supported by educators and psychologists. Although basals are recommended but not prescribed in Canada, in the United States they still dominate the classroom as state and local policies often mandate their use (Goodman, 1986). Some authors believe basal readers have been "over-used" because administrators and teachers have at times lent too much credence to their assumed scientific robustness (Chall, 1987; Watson & Weaver, 1988; Goodman, 1986). A current view of the basal reader is that of an optional tool in the classroom; one of many possible resources for achieving the ends of a language arts program (Jensen & Roser, 1987).

Since the written word is one of the most powerful ways to transmit ideas and information (Kinman & Henderson, 1985), we would assume that textbooks and basals in particular would try to avoid bias. "They should foster a sense of personal worth and dignity for all people" (Bordelon, 1985, p.793).

Concern regarding sex role stereotyping in textbooks has been expressed in the last fifteen years as research into such stereotyping has revealed harmful effects for both females and males. The negative consequences of sexism and stereotyping, including

relationship conflicts, rape, etc., have caused many to seek counselling services (Katz, 1986; Walker, 1979). It is therefore important to continuously analyze the types of models and images that are contained in all kinds of textbooks.

One must be aware of the social changes which paralleled the research into stereotyping in children's literature. The decade of the 1970s was a period of feminist consciousness, a time of focused attention on social and economic discrepancies and injustices. Thorough inspection of educational resources found widespread sexism in both children's literature and textbooks (Shapiro & Snyder, 1982). Preliminary studies conducted in this area have demonstrated a trend toward sex equality in children's books published between 1972-1983 (Tibbetts, 1979b; Rupley, Garcia and Longnion, 1981; Segal, 1982; Fried, 1982; Shau & Scott, 1984; Collins, Ingoldsby & Dellman, 1984; Bordelon, 1985; Garrity, 1987; Dougherty & Engel, 1987). Further research is necessary to determine if this movement toward gender equitable reading materials is continuing, and reaching appropriate levels. "Appropriate distribution of the sexes" would refer to the quantitative representation of the realities in the population. In terms of the depiction of people, a "realistic portrayal" would include approximately 50 percent males and 50 percent females, as it is common knowledge that females comprise approximately 51% of our population (Fried, 1982; Michel, 1986). The "appropriate depiction of adults in careers" would reflect a realistic representation of numbers of males and females in the labour force for the time the materials were developed. In 1981 Statistics Canada reported that of the total number of employed people 15 years and over, 58% were men and 42% were women, and 1981 Statistics reported 59% men and 41% women (1981 and 1985 Statistics were chosen so a fair criticism could be made of the 1984-1988 series, which most likely began developing a few years prior).

The present research study will deal with two major questions; 1) Is sexism present in the predominant basal readers currently used in Alberta? 2) Does any difference exist between older reading series (published between 1971 and 1977) and

more recent series, from the same publisher, in terms of amount of gender inequality demonstrated?

One major criticism of previous research in this area is that the textbooks analyzed have not been current (Fishman, 1976). A second area of criticism concerns the lack of clearly defined criteria used in the content analyses to determine sexism. The present study attempts to address the above issues by analyzing the recent basic readers used in the schools, and by providing clear definitions of concepts and criteria used.

A. Definitions

The following definitions represent the interpretation of terms and concepts within the context of this study:

Sexism - "discrimination on the basis of gender" (Tibbetts, 1979a, p. 34).
-- "any attitude, action or institutional practice which subordinates people because of their sex or assigns roles in society on the basis of sex" (Council on Interracial Books for Children, 1981, p. 31).

Sex role -- "a constellation of qualities an individual understands to characterize males or females in his or her culture" (Brooks-Gunn & Matthews, 1973, p. 512).

Stereotypes --"biasing elements which do not take into due consideration the wide range of men's and women's individual capacities and aspirations and/or express the notion that all or almost all men or women are the same in some ways, when they are not" (Michel, 1986, p. 89).

Basic Learning Resources --"learning resources approved by Alberta Education as the most appropriate for meeting the majority of the goals and objectives of courses, or substantial components of courses outlined in the provincial programs of study" (Alberta Education, 1986, p. iii).

Supplementary Learning Resources --"learning resources approved by Alberta Education because they support courses outlined in the provincial programs of studies by enriching or reinforcing the learning experience" (Alberta Education, 1986, p. iv).

Inadequate representation --"girls and women, as they at present appear in children's literature and school textbooks, are misrepresented and/or under-represented. This misrepresentation or under-representation does have a relationship with the development of sex stereotypes" (Michel, 1986, p. 89).

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

A. The Impact of Stereotyped vs. Nonstereotyped Basal Readers

One of the factors which publishers will consider prior to eliminating sexism from their elementary school textbooks will be the potential effects of nonsexist textbooks on both school personnel and students (Scott, 1980a). Studies have been conducted on the impact of sexist and nonsexist reading materials on children's reading interests, comprehension, and attitudes toward sex roles. There is also extensive literature regarding social issues which some believe are related to stereotyping and sexism in general.

1. Children's Reading Interests

Students' motivation to learn from instructional materials is influenced by their interest in the content of the materials. It is therefore necessary to provide highly interesting materials for both sexes in order to encourage learning (Schau & Scott, 1984).

Before the 1970s, research on reading preferences suggested that girls enjoyed materials about both females and males but boys preferred reading about males (Zimet, 1966). It was believed that readers should accentuate male oriented stories since both girls and boys would demonstrate interest in such materials. Tibbetts (1974) indicated that boys and girls may differ in their reading preferences because of society's influence and expectations as opposed to an innate interest. Graebner (1972) suggested that boys may not read girl-oriented stories because female characters are very often dull, not because the stories are about girls. This conclusion has been supported by a number of studies and research reviews (Frasher, 1977; Frasher & Frasher, 1978; Scott, 1980b; Schau & Scott, 1984; Bordelon, 1985).

Frasher (1977) read "Pippi Longstocking" to thirteen boys and eighteen girls in grade three over a period of one week. After the book was finished, the subjects wrote the name of the character they liked most and the reasons for their choice. Frasher found a large proportion of male and female students chose Pippi (a clever, adventuresome, nontraditional female) as the character they liked best. Pippi was chosen as their favorite character by a wide margin over two traditional characters. Frasher stated that these factors "offer a strong rebuttal to the argument that boys will not read and cannot enjoy reading about females. The personality, behavior, and story context of characters clearly play as great, if not a greater role than sex in influencing or determining children's enjoyment of stories" (p. 863).

In another study, Frasher and Frasher (1978) tried to determine if children prefer traditional sex-typed characters or nontraditional roles, and if boys and girls differed in their choices. Each student involved in the study read two stories about a same sex child in a contemporary setting. The main characters in the stories differed in that one was sex role stereotyped, and the other was non sex-typed in personality and behavior. Following the reading of each story, the subjects responded to 10 multiple choice comprehension questions. After the stories and questions were completed, the students wrote the title of the story they preferred, the name of the main character they liked better, and the name of the main character they identified with the most. The subjects also wrote a couple of sentences stating why they selected each choice. Results revealed the boys equally enjoyed the traditional and nontraditional stories, whereas the girls preferred the nontraditional roles.

Scott (1980b) reviewed several studies and concluded that both girls and boys evaluated stories with nontraditional female main characters as high as, or higher than, stories with major characters who are male. She concluded that new textbooks featuring a sizable number of stories about females, some in nontraditional roles, should not hamper

students' interest in reading. If the stories are appealing and of good quality, such books may even heighten the learner's interest.

Another review of research on reading preferences was done by Schau and Scott (1984). These authors found that students do not dislike textbooks containing main characters in sex equitable roles, but actually prefer them over traditional books in some instances. The two major findings from this study were: 1) Same-sex main characters are often preferred by both males and females, regardless of role content; 2) When students do not demonstrate a preference for same-sex characters, they are about equally likely to prefer sex-typed content or have no preference at all. Schau and Scott (1984) concluded that "Sex equitable materials do not decrease student interest in materials, and they may assist in generating interest in both male and female students" (p. 189).

Bordelon's (1985) review of the research led to somewhat different conclusions. She reasoned that boys would read, understand and be interested in stories with female main characters, provided they are not in sex typed roles. Bordelon concluded that content was the determining factor.

Scott (1986) had students in grades four, seven and eleven read four stories, each with different sex-role situations. The subjects were asked about the specific roles demonstrated in the stories, and a questionnaire was given to assess sex role attitudes regarding roles and activities in general. The students also answered one question about their interest in each story and four multiple choice questions which tested comprehension. The females demonstrated a preference for the narratives with traditional female activities, for both male and female main characters. The male subjects showed an equal interest in all stories, however, they liked them less overall than the females. Scott emphasized that stories with nontraditional male characters were accepted by both sexes at least as well as sex-typed male oriented stories. This would argue against the notion that students would not enjoy reading such nontraditional content.

2. Reading Comprehension

Another area investigated by researchers has been how sex-stereotyped and nonsex-stereotyped role portrayals have affected comprehension. Frasher and Frasher (1978) found that for both sexes nontraditional stories resulted in significantly better comprehension. Two research reviews indicated that the results concerning comprehension have been inconsistent and unclear (Scott, 1980b; Schau & Scott, 1984). Scott (1980b) reported difficulty determining whether nontraditional stories were more difficult for students to understand because they differed from stereotyped ideas of appropriate behavior or more easily comprehended because of the novelty of the material. Scott and Schau (1984) stated that no consistent pattern was evident concerning the gender characteristics of story characters and their impact on comprehension.

Some research revealed better comprehension when the storylines were sex stereotyped while other studies showed better understanding when the information was depicted in a nontraditional manner. Also, other investigators found the sex and role of the main character resulted in no differences in comprehension. Scott and Schau concluded that "sex equitable materials do not adversely affect either males' or females' comprehension" (p. 190). Bordelon's (1985) research review concluded that the determining factor was the stories' content. She reported that research has shown both comprehension and retention are enhanced when characters adopt novel gender roles. Scott (1986) introduced grades four, seven and eleven students to four types of stories (traditional female, nontraditional female, traditional male or nontraditional male main characters). Her results demonstrated no difference in students' comprehension between stories with stereotyped or nonstereotyped content.

3. Children's Sex Role Attitudes

Children's books provide role models which are identified with and imitated, especially when the characters are of the same sex as the reader (Scott, 1980b). Researchers have reported that exposure to stories with nontraditional main characters encourages children of both sexes to become more flexible in their sex role attitudes (Schau, 1978; Scott, 1980b; Schau & Scott, 1984; Scott, 1986). Studies have also shown that reading about sex-stereotyped characters may increase sexist beliefs (Schau & Scott, 1984; Scott, 1986). Schau & Scott (1984) concluded that overall males and females are affected about equally by stereotyped and sex equitable stories. Scott (1986) stated that the approval of nonsexist male behavior is important because sexist attitudes about males have been more difficult to alter.

4. Social Consequences

The practice of sex role stereotyping has come under serious consideration in the last fifteen years. Both the appropriateness and necessity of stereotyped socialization has been questioned by many investigators who have emphasized the harmful aspects of sex stereotyping in both males and females.

Katz (1986) stated that females have been discouraged from achieving both in school and occupations, and males have suffered from school adjustment problems. Cook (1985) reported some negative consequences as being: 1) Overly rigid attitudes about self and others which may lead to anxiety, guilt, relationship conflicts, and a failure to develop adaptive behaviors; 2) Dissonance between perceptions about self and sex role standards which may lead to self-doubt and feelings of insecurity and stress; and 3) An inadequate repetoire of behaviors to cope with various environmental demands and life stages. Stockard and Johnson (1980) reported that sex role stereotyping is a result of (and also results in) male dominance in our society which is reflected in both cultural symbols and daily interactions. "Males are depicted in different roles than women and are

given more value and authority than women in languages, in religions, and in the mass media" (Stockard & Johnson, 1980, p. 19).

Some leading authorities believe that sexism is a contributing factor to some very serious social problems such as rape, sexual abuse and wife battering. Brownmiller (1975) studied the history of rape as a means for men to control women. Rix Rogers (cited in Report sees child sex abuse crisis, 1990) an adviser to the Canadian Health Department, reported that the basic underlying premise to child sexual abuse is sexism and the belief that men are supposed to be powerful and are entitled to take sexual advantage of a woman or child. Both Weitzman and Dreen (1982) and Walker (1979) connected sex role socialization to the problem of violence against women. Weitzman and Dreen stated that socialization patterns in society that encourage the domination of females by males and dissuade men from developing androgynous characteristics are a chief source of battering traits in men. The battered woman, as most women, experiences societal pressures to be submissive which make escaping a violent situation less likely. Walker reported that her "feminist analysis of all violence is that sexism is the real underbelly of human suffering. Men fight with other men to prove that they are not "sissies" like women. Women show passive faces to the world while struggling to keep their lives together without letting men know how strong they really are for fear of hurting their men's masculine image. And men beat up women in order to keep themselves on the top of this whole messy heap. Little girls and boys learn these sex-role expectations through early socialization" (p. xi).

"In conclusion, children have much to gain and little to lose from an increase in the number of female main characters in stories, from increased portrayal of nonstereotyped role models in stories, and from the use of female-inclusive language in reading materials" (Scott, 1980b, p. 51). Children's interest in sex fair materials does not seem to be diminished, and in some instances may even be improved. Their comprehension is not interfered with but instead may be increased. Children's ideas

about sex roles may be broadened and their attitudes regarding appropriate role behavior for each sex may be more flexible (Scott, 1980; Shau & Scott, 1984; Scott, 1986). Finally, there are several negative social issues which may be consequences of the sexism and stereotyping existing in society.

B. Quantitative and Qualitative Analyses of Children's Books

1. Supplementary Reading Books

a. Quantitative Representation

Some researchers have focused specifically on books that received the Caldecott Medal and Honor book designations. Alleen Nilsen (1978, cited in Engel, 1981) examined all the Caldecott winners and runners-up from 1951 to 1975. This researcher revealed a steady decline in female characters appearing in the books over this time period. From 1951 to 1955 the percentage of female characters in the books was 46%, whereas the percentage from 1971 to 1975 had shrunk to 22%.

In 1981, Engel analyzed the Caldecott Medal and Honor books for 1976-1980 by replicating Nilsen's 1978 study. Engel followed the guidelines for counting characters established by Nilsen (1978) to the extent that they were known. Each character that was depicted in the narrative and illustrations was classified as male, female, or "neuter". The gender was ascertained by name, physical characteristics, attire or personal pronoun preferences. Anthropomorphized animals or objects were also classified and counted. A group consisting of seven or more people was counted as one character according to which gender prevailed in the group, or "neuter' if sex differences weren't visually obvious.

Engel also included a count of how often a reader would encounter an image of male and female characters. Images were recorded each time a character was mentioned or referred to in the text, as well as each time she/he was depicted in an illustration. Animals were counted as male or female images when identified as such, otherwise they

were recorded in the "neuter" category. This study also found male dominance in numbers of characters portrayed, with only a slight increase in female characters (28%).

Collins, Ingoldsby and Dellman (1984) examined sex role distribution in the Caldecott books from 1979 to 1982. They concluded that male and female differences have decreased significantly as more females were present in central roles, titles and illustrations. Although Collins et al. reported a substantial advance toward greater sex equality, they noted the representation of women is not yet equal.

In 1987, Heintz analyzed the 14 award winning Caldecott books for the years 1971 to 1984. This researcher found male and female characters were still appearing in unequal numbers in both the text (ratio of 1.5:1) and illustrations (ratio of 2:1). Although Heintz's results indicate a definite bias in the books, the findings demonstrate a significant improvement from an earlier study which served as a model (Weitzman, 1972, cited in Heintz, 1987).

Dougherty and Engel (1987) analyzed the Caldecott winning books from 1981 through 1985 and found a dramatic change toward sex equality in number of characters (43% of all characters were females whereas only 28% were females in Engel's study). Dougherty and Engel reported that their image count also showed a movement toward greater sex equality, however it was less substantial than the character count (from 27% females in 1981 to 37% females in 1986).

Another study of award winning books analyzed Newbery Medal books from 1977 to 1984 (Kinman & Henderson, 1985). These researchers reported the number of books with girls or women as the main characters has increased when compared to the findings of a 1971 study done by the Feminists on Children's Literature (cited in Kinman & Henderson, 1985). Kinman and Henderson also suggested that authors are providing positive role models for both boys and girls by developing nonstereotypic characters "with diverse abilities and opportunities" (p. 888). Unfortunately these researchers failed to provide any clear method or criteria for analyzing these books and only mentioned

using guidelines from various sources. Their vague manner of reporting results also lead to loose and ambiguous conclusions which are difficult to compare with related studies. Certain methodological problems such as these have been pointed out by Tibbetts (1979a) and will be discussed in greater detail in a later section.

In summary, current research is showing an improvement in numerical representation of characters and occupations in award-winning supplementary books, however, sexism is still evident (Collins et al., 1984; Heintz, 1987; Dougherty & Engel, 1987; Kinman & Henderson, 1985).

b. Character Analysis

Some studies indicate the characters in award-winning children's books display both traditional and nontraditional characteristics (Engel, 1981; Collins et al., 1984; Heintz, 1987). Engel (1981) noted both traditional and nontraditional patterns of clothing, language, and roles of the characters. Heintz (1987) reported that "females were often pictured in 'the traditional feminine role', but were not limited to it; females used their brains as well as their beauty to triumph in problem situations" (p. 18). It was stated by Collins et al. (1984) that women possess nontraditional attributes (ie. being adventurous, active and often found outdoors) when in a central role. On the other hand, when women are not in a central role they demonstrate stereotypes that are traditionally feminine.

Although Caldecott female characters have displayed some traditionally masculine characteristics, males have greatly outnumbered females in number and variety of activities and occupations (Heintz, 1987). Stereotyped behaviors continue to dominate the storylines: "Male children outnumber female children in every activity except socializing and primping/posing. While boys are often shown running and jumping, girls are shown watching patiently or engaged in social activities with their mothers" (Heintz, 1987, p. 15).

Ray (1982) investigated the sex role stereotyping of males in 1970 through 1980 Caldecott books. She discovered that several books emphasized three aspects of the stereotype: "1) males must not show emotions, 2) males must strive to achieve excellence, and 3) males are responsible for the well-being of others" (p. 74). Ray reported the problem is not what the books present to their readers, but the amount the stories emphasize their point. "Success and determination are fine until the achievement drive behind them becomes life's primary motivation, which is basically what happened to the males in these stories" (p. 76). For instance, not only are boys told they can achieve great things and succeed in life but they must. Boys also learn they must protect, take care of and make decisions for their future family. Finally, if males are going to be responsible they must maintain a sense of control and distance over their feelings. Ray noted that society's new values, which recognize the importance of nurturing and expressive behavior in both sexes, are not being depicted by children's storybook characters in present day publications.

In conclusion, characters in award-winning books may display both traditional and nontraditional behaviors, however, males and females are primarily portrayed in restricted, stereotyped roles.

2. Basic Readers

a. Quantitative Representation

Many studies of elementary school textbooks, and specifically basal readers, have looked for evidence of sexism by examining the number of male and female main characters as well as sex differences in the number and variety of occupations ascribed to the characters.

Results of early investigations revealed that males outnumbered females as major characters in stories and illustrations (Cullen, 1972; Graebner, 1972; Committee to Study Sex Discrimination in the Kalamazoo Public Schools, (hereon referred to as the

Kalamazoo Committee, 1973). Cullen (1972) indicated that female characters were stereotyped as housewives, teachers or librarians and Graebner (1972) reported that women's occupations were rarely atypical. The Kalamazoo Committee (1973) found a great discrepancy in number of occupations assigned to the sexes. Men were portrayed in 213 different jobs, whereas women held only 39 occupations.

An influential survey of basal readers was conducted by the Committee of Women on Words and Images in 1972 and updated in 1975. This group initially analyzed 2,760 stories appearing in 134 readers from 14 publishers. The 1975 update examined 83 readers published between 1972 and 1975 from nine major publishers. There was no improvement in balanced representation over 1972, as the ratio dividing male and female representation in terms of "boy-centered stories to girl-centered stories" (p. 66) actually increased from 5:2 in 1972 to 7:2 in 1975. The 1975 investigation found the ratio of male occupations to female occupations was 3:1. The Committee reported that although women were shown in a wider variety of occupations than in 1972 (as were men), they were usually depicted "in the 'job' of unimaginative mother" (p. 66).

Fishman (1976) reported that a large amount of the criticism directed at children's texts was no longer appropriate because it attacked texts which were no longer being published or were entirely out of circulation. In the mid 1970s more research on current textbooks was called for in order to seriously consider the criticism of sexism in elementary reading texts "because of the gradual and presumedly wide impact the feminist criticism has made on publishers" (Fishman, 1976, p. 444). Various publishers such as Harper & Row, Lippencott and McGraw-Hill had planned changes in their texts due to this criticism. However, Fishman (1976) recommended that results from earlier studies be compared with current editions to see whether guidelines for improvement had been implemented.

Subsequently, two separate studies were conducted, each having the purpose of comparatively analyzing recent textbooks with older books (Marten & Matlin, 1976;

Britton & Lumpkin, 1977). In spite of the new guidelines on sexism, an analysis of post-guideline texts revealed that "changes have been minimal" (Britton & Lumpkin, 1977, p. 44). Both studies found that limited progress had been made. A great disparity still existed between male/female representation as major characters in textbook series. Britton and Lumpkin also found the imbalance in career role assignments continued. In a newer reading series females were depicted in only 16% of the various career roles.

Britton and Lumpkin's 1977 study has been criticized for failing to distinguish time periods when noticeable changes in the make-up of texts appeared. Rupley, Garcia and Longnion (1981) proposed that since publisher's guidelines for better treatment of women and minorities appeared in the mid 1970s, it is reasonable to not expect changes in materials published before the late 1970s. These researchers stated although Britton and Lumpkin were supposedly examining "post-guideline" texts with copyrights of 1976, the books probably began developing in the early 1970s. This was a time when equal treatment of the sexes in children's books was not a pervasive issue. Rupley et al. recommended that in order to see if publishers guidelines had taken effect more current reading series be analyzed which is what their study proposed to do. These researchers analyzed several basal reading series published in 1976 and 1978 by eight publishing houses. After comparing their results with Britton and Lumpkin's findings on the 1974;-1976 books, Rupley et al. reported a "trend toward equalization" (p. 789) as the 1978 readers demonstrated a nearly equal percentage of male (25.7%) and female (23.5%) main characters.

The findings of Rupley, Garcia and Longnion's (1981) investigation began what appeared to be a movement toward sex equality. The studies of the 80s began providing evidence that the previous decade's criticisms of sexist children's materials were finally having an effect. But how much of an effect? Scott (1981) analyzed two reading series also examined by Rupley et al., however, her investigation produced somewhat different results from the Rupley study. Scott's study analyzed the amount of sexism in basal

readers published as new series since publishers guidelines for gender-fair materials were declared. She reported the percentage of female main characters had increased greatly when compared to the results of Britton and Lumpkins' 1977 study which showed 16% of the main characters were female while 61% were male. Scott found the proportion of female main characters was almost one-third of all main characters and was only slightly less than the proportion of males (38% males; 31% females). Although this demonstrates a substantial improvement toward equalization it is not evidence of equal representation as was found in Rupley, Garcia and Longnion's 1981 study. The discrepant findings may be due to the smaller sample used in Scott's investigation.

Fried (1982) noted an increase in the number of times females were portrayed in 1981 basals as opposed to 1974 readers from the same publisher. Although she reported an improvement in representation in some areas, Fried concluded that sexism still existed. This study can be criticized for its vague and unclear methodology. These criticisms will be discussed in a later section.

A later study by Britton, Lumpkin and Britton (1984) also demonstrated a progression toward sex equality. Their longitudinal study, which investigated gender and ethnic bias in reading series, began in 1972 and analyzed 57 reading textbooks published 1958-1982. The researchers examined bias factors within major character and career role assignments. The major reading series were separated into five time zones by publication date to account for changes across time. The data was gathered by first identifying the major characters from each story and coding them according to one of four categories: Male, Female, Male/Female Shown Equally, or Other. The Male/Female Shown Equally category was used when two or more characters (male and female) were shown equally. The Other classification was employed when an entire race, inanimate object, or abstract concept was featured. Fact sheet stories, plays and skill concept chapters were counted as stories, however, poetry was not analyzed. The researchers also categorized characters according to six ethnic evaluations.

Careers were recorded whenever possible for main characters and all other adult men and women mentioned in the text or depicted in illustrations. A "Neutral" category was used when careers were not identified by gender or race. The careers were assigned to the following categories: Anglo Male, Anglo Female, Ethnic Male, Ethnic Female, or Neutral. When an illustration depicted more than 10 adults assigned to a career, a maximum frequency of 10 was recorded to prevent the disproportionate representation of one career. When an indefinite group of people was referred to in a story, for instance "the firemen raced to the fire", a count of two was recorded for the career role. The most frequent career roles were then ranked by gender and race. Britton et al. found the ratio of male to female character roles decreased from 4:1 in 1977-1979 to 1.75:1 in 1980-1982. In the 1980-1982 readers the proportion of major character roles for females of all races was 20%, whereas the proportion of male major character roles was 35%. Britton et al. also reported great misrepresentation between the sexes concerning career role assignments in six 1980-1982 series. Of a total of 5,501 careers depicted, 64% were assigned to Anglo males, whereas 14% were assigned to Anglo females. (Ethnic males were assigned to 17% of career roles, while ethnic females were assigned to 5% of career roles). The researchers stated the 1981 U.S. Bureau of the Census indicated Anglo males were only 51% of the labour force. This means the Anglo male has been overrepresented by 13%. Anglo females, however, have been extremely underrepresented in textbook and story careers. The Census stated that 36% of the labour force was Anglo women (and growing), however reading texts showed only 14% of the women in the labour force.

The two most recent studies of sexism in children's reading series found a definite sex bias in terms of quantitative representation (Garrity, 1987; Batcher, Winter &Wright, 1987). Garrity (1987) examined two editions (1975 and 1983) of the Macmillan Reading Program at the primary level. She reported a slight increase in the percentage of female central characters from 37% in 1975 to 40% in 1983. A greater increase in percentage of

occupations ascribed to females was shown (27% in 1975 up to 36% in 1983). Garrity concluded that publishers did make attempts at more equal representation, however, the numerical depiction of central characters and occupations was still unrealistic. In the 1983 series 60% of the central characters were male whereas 40% were female. Of the total number of occupations, 64% were ascribed to males while 36% were assigned to females.

Batcher et al. (1987) analyzed 12 series of readers used in junior grades from 12 different publishers dated 1970 to 1985. Their results indicated that in fiction males predominate as primary characters. Of the twelve series there was a greater percentage of male primary characters in eight. Female primary characters predominated in three series, and equality existed in one series. Of the nine series which contained non-fiction there was a greater percentage of male primary characters in seven of the series. In one series females predominated as primary characters and equal representation existed in the remaining one. These researchers also investigated numerical representation of both secondary and background characters. Batcher et al (1987) then concluded "In no Reader series were the numbers of females and males approximately equal in all of the categories analyzed, nor were there compensations in some areas to make up for deficiencies in others" (p. 26).

To summarize, in terms of numerical representation of characters in basal readers, many researchers have reported a trend toward equal depiction of the sexes (Rupley et al.; Scott, 1981; Fried, 1982; Britton et al. 1984; Garrity, 1987). One researcher cited evidence of an improved portrayal of the number of males and females in occupations (Garrity, 1987). Although a movement toward equalization in basal readers is occuring, many investigators emphasized that representation is still not realistic (Scott, 1981; Fried, 1982; Britton et al., 1984; Garrity, 1987).

b. Character Analysis

Several studies have suggested that characters in basal readers display sex stereotyped activities (Graebner, 1972; Women on Words & Images, 1975; the Kalamazoo Committee, 1973; Marten & Matlin, 1976; Scott, 1980a, 1981, 1982; Fried, 1982; Michel, 1986; Batcher et al., 1987). Michel (1986) stated "sexist stereotypes operate according to a strict binary logic, assigning to women the qualities and shortcomings denied to men, while men find themselves credited with the positive and negative qualities denied to women" (p.16).

Many researchers have reported that females were shown as passive characters who were often dependent and emotional (Graebner, 1972; Women on Words & Images, 1975; The Kalamazoo Committee, 1973; Fried, 1982; Batcher et al., 1987). Graebner (1972) noted that some books have pictured women who have nothing to say, "the silent characters are smiling female onlookers" (p. 53). Males, on the other hand, appeared much more often as active characters who display traits such as: independence, cleverness, problem-solving ability, and adventurousness (Graebner, 1972; Women on Words & Images, 1975; The Kalamazoo Committee, 1973; Marten & Matlin, 1976; Scott, 1981; Fried, 1982; Batcher et al., 1987). Although storybook males were often seen participating in a wider variety of activities than females, many roles reflected traditional ideas of proper male behavior (ie. strong, lacking in emotional expression and continually active) (Scott 1980a). Scott acknowledged that publishers have attempted to portray female characters in nontraditional roles, with traits such as assertiveness, competence and activity. On the other hand, male characters who still display sex-typed behavior were demonstrating a limited view of human behavior. This narrow perspective restricts boys' choices of roles, in a similar manner to how girls' options were limited. This restricted view "also contributes indirectly to reducing nontraditional role options for females by introducing a new double standard: Girls can now do 'anything' (and everything) but boys should maintain power and dominance at all costs" (p. 241).

Society has traditionally encouraged boys to acquire competitive, independent and aggressive traits while neglecting the development of emotional expressiveness and sensitive care-taking attributes. In reality, however, individual boys and men possess a wide variety of personal qualities and behavioral characteristics. "Because they convey influential messages about society, reading materials are needed to show boys in nurturing and expressive roles as well as active and independent roles" (Scott 1980a, p. 241). The Kalamazoo Committee (1973) reported that although the textbook male is more multi-dimensional than the characterized female, he portrays "an almost impossible to achieve superboy/superman role model" (p. 1 of summary).

Scott (1981) analyzed main character roles in new basal reading series from two major publishers. Three hundred and eighty-five stories from grades one to six were randomly chosen and examined to determine both the sex and characteristics of each main character. First the sex of the main character was assigned to one of fifteen possible categories, after which the stories were coded according to one of four groups: (1) female main characters (girls, adult females, female animals, folk fantasy females, female biography); (2) male main characters (boys, adult males, male animals, folk fantasy males, male biography); (3) both female and male main characters (girls and boys, adult females and males, female and male animals, folk fantasy females and males); and (4) neutral (neuter animals, stories without main characters as in science and social studies chapters). The role behavior portrayed by each main character was examined and judged to be primarily traditional, nontraditional, mixed with both traditional and nontraditional roles, or other. Scott defined traditional role behavior as "that which depicts stereotypic expectations for females or males" (p. 137). Nontraditional roles were defined as "those not expected according to traditional stereotypes..."(p. 137). Stories were categorized as mixed when both traditional and nontraditional role behavior were present. When stories had no main character or there was no identifiable role behavior they were classified as

other. The analysis did not include role behavior of characters in the stories who were not the main character.

An interesting finding was that females were much more likely to be depicted in nontraditional roles, whereas males far more often displayed traditional stereotyped behavior (ie. aggression and competitiveness). Scott provided two possible reasons for this result: 1) The concentration on the changing roles of females has resulted in more stories about nonstereotyped girls and women, 2) The need to alter stereotyped portrayals of men and boys has not yet been dealt with or emphasized sufficiently. Scott stated "According to publisher's guidelines, however, male story characters should reflect the full dimensions of male role behavior, including the ability to express emotions and the desire to participate in traditionally female activities" (p. 139).

In current children's readers, male and female characters were not being portrayed in the full range of possible roles. Although some nontraditional characteristics were being demonstrated, male and female characters primarily shown in stereotypical roles.

C. Proposed Improvements to Former Research Studies

One important criticism that can be made about many of the studies discussed thus far concerns the issue of reliability of coding. Several of the reviewed studies made no mention of this important aspect of research. (Cullen, 1972; Graebner, 1972; Kalamazoo Committee, 1973; Women on Words & Images, 1975; Marten & Matlin, 1976; Britton & Lumpkin, 1977; Scott, 1980a; Engel, 1981; Scott, 1981; Fried, 1982; Ray, 1982; Collins et al., 1984; Kinman & Henderson, 1985; Michel, 1986; Heintz, 1987; Dougherty & Engel, 1987; Batcher et al, 1987; Garrity, 1987). Lack of interrater reliability causes one to question the results. Are the findings factual or are they slanted by rater bias and subjectivity? The present study employed additional coders to examine inter-rater reliability.

There have been other criticisms made about the research concerning sexism in children's reading material (Segal, 1982; Tibbetts, 1979; Davis, 1984;). Segal (1982) directed her comments at the earlier studies of Caldecott Medal winners and Honor books (Nilsen, 1971; Weitzman et al., 1972 cited in Segal, 1982). Although these early studies attempted objectivity they showed a "disturbing tendency...to assume that any illustrated figure of unspecified gender is male" (Segal, 1982, p. 31). The present study avoids this problem by using an "Other" category for such ambiguous characters.

Davis (1984) also criticized the early picture book studies (Nilsen, 1971; Weitzman et al., 1972; Bereaud, 1975 cited in Davis, 1984) for their methodological decisions. Davis reported the credibility of these researchers' conclusions was questionable because the units of analysis were unclear and they did not provide operational definitions of categories nor an account of reliability procedures.

Tibbetts (1979a) reviewed five major studies in sexism: Women on Words & Images, 1972; Britton, 1973 and 1975; Weitzman, Eifler, Hokada & Ross, 1972; and Weitzman & Rizzo, 1974. Although the five studies are a small sample of the population which is reported in the literature, they are believed to be important, influential analyses which may serve as a representative sample on the topic. Tibbetts' criticisms appear to apply to the reviewed studies on sexism conducted before as well as after 1979. Tibbetts' review suggested that all five studies lacked a solid basis for valid conclusions and some did not use well structured designs, therefore making replication difficult. Tibbetts focused on two aspects of the major studies: precision of categories used and quantification of the characteristics researched. It was stressed that categories must be clearly defined because this one aspect of research is extremely important to the reliability and validity of a study of content analysis (Holsti, 1969). Tibbetts stated that all five reviewed studies did not provide specific or operational definitions for their criteria for analyzing and categorizing content. Without such standardization, comparisons of related studies became difficult, if not impossible. Even where categories could be easily

compared across studies (such as sex and occupations of characters), they were not presented in a clearly defined form to allow for this. Tibbett's criticisms also apply to other research such as that done by Fried (1982) and Kinman and Henderson (1985). These studies did not report clearly defined methods of analysis which makes replication and comparison of findings difficult.

In summary, Tibbetts stated the researchers should have made use of Holsti's (1969) criteria for the creation of categories: "1) a clear definition; 2) standardization; 3) mutual exclusivity; 4) derivation from a single classification principle" (Tibbetts, 1979, p. 35).

The review of the literature demonstrated that nonstereotyped vs. stereotyped children's readers have an impact on males and females reading interests, comprehension and sex role attitudes. Research has also shown that stereotyping in general may be related to some important social issues in today's society. Previous quantitative and qualitative analyses of children's books have shown that for both supplementary and basic readers a trend toward equalization is occurring, however, representation was still unrealistic and characters were primarily portrayed in a stereotypical fashion.

CHAPTER 3

PURPOSE, HYPOTHESES AND RATIONALE OF THE STUDY

This study attempted to avoid the problems and criticisms of previous work by 1) providing clearly defined unambiguous categories and also specifying the indicators that determine whether or not a particular piece of data falls within a certain category, 2) formulating mutually exclusive categories so no content datum could be placed into more than one category, 3) making use of other coders in order to provide evidence of inter-rater reliability.

The present study was designed to contribute to the existing literature in the following ways:

1) to correct the methodological problems listed previously and expand previous methodologies in the sense of focusing on images in basal readers in addition to main characters and

2) to analyze the most recent basal readers in use as very little research has been conducted on 1984-88 series.

The current study replicated part of a major study done by Britton et al. (1984) with some minor modifications; the addition of two counts and an analysis borrowed from other authors to extend the focus of research. The methodology from the Britton et al. research was chosen because this study was one of the reported few which followed Holsti's (1969) recommendations for a well structured content analysis design. Britton et al. provided operational definitions and clear categories with specific indicators which allowed for mutual exclusivity and reliable coding.

Although images have been previously analyzed in supplementary books, the analysis of images in both the illustrations and text of basal readers, has not yet been documented. It is believed an image count is worthwhile and necessary because "the total

number of male and female images may be more influential on the child's developing concepts of sex roles than just the number of different characters" (Engel, 1981, p. 648).

This study also included an analysis of the role behavior portrayed by the main characters. King (1979) stated that although the definitions of sexism "originally used to refer to practices that discriminate against women, the term now includes any usage that unfairly delimits the aspirations or attributes of either sex" (appendix vii). Research has shown that females have been depicted non-stereotypically, however males were primarily portrayed in traditional roles and occupations (Scott, 1981; Ray, 1982; Garrity, 1987). "Boys continue to be portrayed as strong and silent, engaged primarily in activities stereotypically associated with males, such as sports, adventure, and leadership" (Scott, 1980, p. 240-241). In 1981, Scott found that females were much more likely to be represented in nontraditional than traditional roles, however, the opposite proved true for males. She noted that this finding may be due to 1) the emphasis on changing female's portrayals and 2) the fact that the importance of changing the roles of males in reading materials has not yet been sufficiently recognized.

As mentioned previously, one purpose of the present study was to analyze both old (pre- 1977) and recent (1984-1988) reading series from two publishing companies - Holt, Rinehart & Winston (HRW), and Nelson, for evidence of sexism. Recent series need to be examined and compared with older editions in order to rule out the possibility that progress made in this area is beginning to erode. Segal (1982) reported "to prevent erosion of that progress, we need to let publishers know that the call for nonstereotyped material wasn't a passing fad, that we still seek books that depict varied sex roles and a balanced representation of female and male characters and experience..." (p. 31). The companies selected are major publishers which have the most recent series that are both available and popular throughout the province of Alberta. Basal readers were chosen because they are considered to be central to the education process and an integral part of initial mastery learning. Another reason basals were selected is because Schau and Scott

(1984) reported in their integration of the research literature that although many non-sexist supplementary materials have been produced lately, such developments in basic textbooks have been slow.

For the present study, sexism refers to the unequal representation and misrepresentation of males and females. Michel (1986) states unequal representation "is in itself an indication of sexism, since in virtually all societies, the number of women is equal, or even superior, to that of men" (p. 49). The readers were examined for representation of the sexes in terms of the proportions of main characters, images and career roles. The proportions of male and female career roles depicted will be discussed relative to the actual proportions of men and women which comprise the labour force in Canada. The readers were also analyzed for sex role stereotyping of main character roles in terms of the behavior and activities portrayed.

It is of interest whether Nelson and Holt, Rinehart & Winston have made significant changes in quantitative representation of males and females over time (seven to seventeen years) in their elementary basal reading series. Much of the prior reported research on textbooks has been cross-sectional and examined only current editions from various publishers which makes it difficult to account for trends across time in a particular series. This project attempts to broaden its base of analysis by including older series from the same publishers.

After identifying several elementary basal reading series, four were selected to be included in the analysis. The readers were chosen so that each publishing company was represented by both an "old" and "recent" series. The readers within one of the "older" series were published between 1971 and 1977, which was seven to 17 years before the publication of the readers in the "recent" series of that same company (1984-1988). The other "older" series was published between 1972 and 1974, which was 10 to 13 years before the publication of the "recent" series of that publisher (1984-1985). Research on

sexism has shown some steady progress over the last 15 years, however, complete equalization has not yet been consistently demonstrated.

Hypothesis 1

It was hypothesized that sexism (inequality in terms of quantitative representation) would be present in all the basal series examined in terms of proportion of males to females for: (A) main characters, (B) images and (C) careers.

Hypothesis 2

Hypothesis 2 predicted that there would be less sexism (ie. less inequality in terms of representation) in the more recent series when compared to the older series in terms of (A) main characters, (B) images and (C) careers.

CHAPTER 4

METHOD

A. Measures and Procedures

For this study, a total of 37 elementary basal readers from two major publishers was examined. Two reading series (one "old" and one "recent" series) from each publishing company were analyzed to assess changes over time. Because of time limitations, every second reader from each series was examined for a total of 947 stories from grades one through six. A list of the series and all analyzed readers within each is provided in Table 1.

The entire content of each reader was analyzed to determine three separate counts: 1) number of male/female/ and mixed sex/other main characters, 2) number of male/female/other images, and 3) number and type of male/female/neutral career roles. The readers were also analyzed for the role behavior demonstrated by each main character. The classification system was developed by combining guidelines from three major studies. For the main character and career role count, the methods used in the Britton et al. (1984) investigation were employed, without the ethnicity dimension and with some modifications (to be discussed later). For the image count some guidelines from Nilsen's (1978) study, replicated by Engel (1981) and Dougherty and Engel (1987), were followed, while others were modified. The role behavior analysis was patterned after Scott's (1981) research, with some minor changes. An example of how the chapters were analyzed or coded is provided in Appendix A.

Main Character Count

Each reading book was examined by first turning to the table of contents and listing all chapters (stories, plays, poems, etc.) on a master sheet. Every selection listed was then analyzed. Data collection procedures included identifying the major characters

Table 1

Readers and Reading Series Examined

Language Development Reading, Nelson (Old) (1971-1977)

Surprise! Surprise!	(1977)	Treasure Chest	(1977)
Pets and Puppets	(1977)	Rowboats & Rollerskates	(1975)
Toy-Box	(1977)	Hockey Cards & Hopscotch	(1971)
Saturday Magic	(1977)	Kites & Cartwheels	(1973)
Make-Believe Time	(1977)	Toboggons & Turtlenecks	(1973)
Wonder Time	(1977)		

Networks, Nelson (Recent) (1984- 1988)

Ducks Can't Count	(1985)	Saltwater Stories	(1987)
Green for the Queen	(1985)	A Dog for Keeps	(1987)
Playful Penguins	(1985)	Kuro the Starling	(1988)
How I Saw the Parade	(1986)	Home Movie	(1988)
Giant's Child	(1987)	Alison's Ghosts	(1984)
Know it All Frog	(1987)	One John A. Too Many	(1984)
Beaver's Flat Tail	(1987)	Peanut Butter Forever	(1984)
Squirrels On the Move	(1988)		

Sounds of Language, Holt, Rinehart & Winston (Old) (1972-1974)

Sounds of a Hound Dog	(1974)	Sounds of Mystery	(1972)
Sounds After Dark	(1974)	Sounds of a Young Hunter	(1972)
Sounds of the Storyteller	(1972)	Sounds of a Distant Drum	(1972)

Impressions, Holt, Rinehart & Winston (Recent) (1984-1985)

How I Wonder	(1984)	West of the Moon	(1984)
When the Wind Blows	(1984)	Under the Sea	(1985)
Fly Away Home	(1984)		

in each chapter, defined as "either the person(s) around whom the action or plot centered, or the character whose activity was essential to the plot. The main character had the primary dialogue and was usually the decision maker" (Britton et al., 1984, p. 727). The major character(s) was assigned to one of the following categories: male, female, or other. Britton et al. included a fourth category "Male/Female Shown Equally" which was discarded for the present study because of the forseen difficulty of defining how the characters were "shown equally".

If the major character was male, the chapter was categorized as having one male main character. If the chapter had two major characters, the chapter received a count of two main characters each listed under the appropriate gender category. Animals were counted as main characters only when assigned a sex (through personal pronouns or a masculine/feminine name). If the gender of an animal could not be determined or was ambiguous then the chapter received a count in the other category. The other category was also used for instances of no obvious main character, more than two major characters, or if an inanimate object or abstract concept (the wind, etc.) was featured. An important rule for all three counts was: When the gender of the main character(s), image or career role is in doubt use the category of other or neutral. Each item in the table of contents was listed as a unit of analysis, therefore a series of stories with a continuous plot was analyzed on a per story basis.

Image Count

The image count included "each mention of each character, and each reference to each character, and each visual representation of each character" (Engel, 1981, p. 648). In previous studies results from the image count have shown equal to greater sexism in terms of representation of the sexes than the character count (Engel, 1981; Dougherty & Engel, 1987). The categories male, female, and mixed sex/other were used. Each personal pronoun (I, me, he, she, you, etc.) and each name or word which referred to a

male or female was counted (mother, brothers, they, our, us, let's, etc.). Both singulars and plurals were counted. The mixed sex/other category was used for two reasons: 1) For mixed sex images- when the image in the text referred to both a male and female (or males and females) (they, us, students, we, etc.); 2) For other images- when the gender of the image was ambiguous or undefined (the stranger, you, I, they, etc.) Illustrations and text were examined separately and then totaled. Animals were counted only when identified as female or male through use of personal pronouns or feminine/masculine name. Inanimate objects (toys, boats, dolls, etc.) and abstract figures/spirits were not counted (ghosts, gods, martians, etc.). References to characters identified as female/male were counted when obvious and specified (lad, gal, dear, etc.). Sarcasm was not counted (idiot, jerk, Queen of Sheba, etc). Feminine/masculine references (other than characters) were not recorded (places such as "Julie's Cove or expressions such as "Oh boy", "By George").

Additional Rules Used For the Image Count:

Illustrations

-When ever in doubt of whether an illustration was male or female it was counted as other.

- When a body part was shown (an arm or leg) it was counted under the appropriate category if gender was known from other pictures or the text, or if gender was unknown it was recorded under other.

Text

- Any printing within the story was analyzed as text (such as printing in illustrations) however, the author's name, artist, etc. was not counted.

- The word "it" was not counted (animal referred to as male or female, then "it")

- The word "you" when used in the general sense was counted as other.

- Words such as: someone, friend, one, etc. were recorded as female or male when gender specified, or as other when gender unknown.

- The generic use of a word such as teacher, friend, etc. received no count.

- An image such as "Jack's father" received two counts, one for Jack and one for father.

Career Role Count

Career assignments were recorded by gender for adult men and women. Careers not identified by gender were recorded as Neutral. "A career was defined as work providing an assumed means of financial support for a person or family" (Britton et al., 1984, p. 727). A career was recorded when it was depicted in an illustration or mentioned in the text and it was placed in one of three categories: male, female or neutral. The research procedures specified that whenever possible a career was recorded for major characters and all others depicted in the narrative and illustrations. If the same fireman was shown several times, the career role count was recorded as "one". However, if there were seven different fireman in the story, the career of fireman was recorded seven times.

When an indefinite number of people was referred to in a story, for instance, "the policemen came to the school", the career of policeman was recorded with the reference "undefined number." Readers which included gender-identified animals, although assigned to major character categories, were not assigned to career roles. The neutral career could not be assigned to either gender, for example, "the storekeeper gave the girl change".

The career role of "mother/father" was recorded when a female/male adult was shown or described in a child care activity, or referred to as mom, dad, etc. (providing no other occupation had been ascribed to her/him). If an occupation was ascribed to the character then this career role superceded the "job" of parent.

The present study examined the number of times the adult characters were depicted in some identifiable income-producing career role (with the exception of the mother/father role).

Additional Rules Used for the Career Count:

- The same character who was depicted in both an illustration and in the text was counted only once.
- Characters that "work" but their occupations were unspecified were recorded as "unspecified occupation" under the appropriate category ("she drove to work").
- Careers were counted even when mentioned by a minor character ("Billy hadn't seen his father, who was a magician, for many years").
- Careers that were referred to but not ascribed to any character were not counted as careers ("You sound like a school teacher").

Role Behavior

The role behavior portrayed by each main character was analyzed for adults, children and animals to ascertain if the role was primarily: traditional, non-traditional, mixed with both traditional and non-traditional roles, neutral or other. Traditional role behavior was defined as "that which depicts stereotypic expectations for females or males" (Scott, 1981, p. 137). Consequently, female main characters who were primarily: passive, nurturing, dependent, sensitive, fearful, timid, stupid or foolish, subservient to others, helpful, weak, concerned with physical appearance, gentle, expressive of affection and tender emotions (ie. crying), were categorized as traditional. Traditional male main characters were primarily: active, aggressive, independent, brave, competitive, adventurous, intelligent, strong, clever, athletic, involved in stereotypically masculine sports or hobbies (fishing, baseball, etc.), shown in a leadership role and lacking in emotional expression except anger.

Non-traditional roles were defined as "those not expected according to traditional stereotypes so that stories in which a female main character had an active role or a male main character had a nurturing role" (Scott, 1981, p. 137). Main characters classified as mixed displayed both traditional and nontraditional role behavior. The neutral category was used when main characters demonstrated "neutral" behaviors only (eating, sleeping, walking, whistling, etc.) An animal main character who displayed only behavior characteristic of that particular creature was also classified as neutral. Stories were categorized as other when no identifiable role behavior appeared, because there was no main character, or an abstract concept or inanimate object was featured. The other category was also employed when more than two main characters were depicted, or when the role behavior of the main character was ambiguous or in doubt.

The role behavior of the main character was determined by listing all his/her behaviors which fit into the descriptions of traditional or nontraditional on a piece of paper.

	Traditional	**Non-traditional**
Example - female	cried 1	brave 11
	cleaned 11	played baseball 1
	displayed affection 1	

A tally mark was recorded each time the character was shown engaging in that particular activity followed by a totalling of the tallies at the end of the story. If 55 percent or more of the behaviors or activities were traditional, the character was categorized as traditional. A non-traditional main character demonstrated 55 percent or more non-traditional behaviors. When both traditional and non-traditional behaviors were between 45-55 percent the character was classified as mixed. A main character was categorized as neutral when only "neutral" behaviors were displayed. A character's role was also recorded as

traditional or non-traditional from a general, global or overall impression of role behavior in a few exceptional instances.

Reliability

Inter-rater reliability was determined by having four coders (two males and two females) of varying ages (two between 25 and 27 years and two between 59 and 60 years) analyze a selection of 12 stories. The coders examined the stories for the counts of main characters, career roles, images and the role behavior analysis according to the coding scheme and rules employed by the researcher.

CHAPTER 5
RESULTS

Hypothesis 1

It was hypothesized that sexism (inequality in terms of quantitative representation) would be present in all the basal series examined in the categories of: number of male and female (A) main characters, (B) images and (C) careers. Statistics performed on the data for (C) careers excluded the mother/father role counts as Statistics Canada does not recognize these classifications.

This hypothesis was tested through a chi-square test of independence which was performed for each of the categories, the results of which are presented in Table 2. Hypothesis 1 was confirmed in that overall for all three categories the representation of males was significantly greater than the representation of females.

Hypothesis 2

Hypothesis 2 predicted that there would be less sexism (less inequality in terms of representation) in the more recent readers when compared to the older series in terms of (A) main characters, (B) images and (C) careers.

Initially, proportions "per book" were calculated for male vs. female representation in each category (see Table 3) and mean difference scores (the proportion of males minus the proportion of females) were derived for the publishing companies and years within each category (see Table 4).

Based on the difference scores, hypotheses 2(A), (B) and (C) were tested through use of a 2(company) x 2(year) analysis of variance (see Table 5). The analysis of variance results for (A) main character count indicated a main effect for year, with a significant increase in female main characters, and no interaction effect with company. There was no significant difference between companies.

Table 2

Chi-Square Analyses of Counts for Main Characters, Images and Careers

Main Characters
Sex

Reading Series			Males	Females	Row Totals
Nelson	-	Old	105	56	161
	-	Recent	24	42	66
HRW	-	Old	167	43	210
	-	Recent	67	44	111
	Column Totals		363	185	548

X^2 (3, N = 548) = 44.71, ρ <.05

Images
Sex

Reading Series			Males	Females	Row Totals
Nelson	-	Old	16438	8465	24903
	-	Recent	4276	5418	9694
HRW	-	Old	13005	3294	16299
	-	Recent	4948	2773	7721
	Column Totals		38667	19950	58617

X^2 (3, N = 58617) = 1483.48, ρ <.05

Careers
Sex

Reading Series			Males	Females	Row Totals
Nelson	-	Old	242	55	297
	-	Recent	76	22	98
HRW	-	Old	159	17	176
	-	Recent	65	18	83
	Column Totals		542	112	654

X^2 (3, N = 654) = 10.49, ρ <.05

Table 3

Total Number (#) and Proportion (P) of Clearly Defined Male and Female Main Characters, Images and Careers Per Series

Main Characters

Reading Series	Males		Females	
	#	P	#	P
Nelson - Old	105	.639	56	.361
- Recent	24	.333	42	.667
HRW - Old	167	.766	43	.234
- Recent	67	.591	44	.409

Images

Reading Series	Males		Females	
	#	P	#	P
Nelson - Old	16438	.618	8465	.382
- Recent	4276	.469	5418	.531
HRW - Old	13005	.795	3294	.205
- Recent	4948	.623	2773	.377

Careers

Reading Series	Males		Females	
	#	P	#	P
Nelson - Old	242	.765	55	.235
- Recent	76	.743	22	.257
HRW - Old	159	.906	17	.094
- Recent	65	.813	18	.187

Table 4

Mean Differences in Proportions (Male-Female) for Counts of Main Characters, Images and Careers

		Main Characters	
		Year	
		Old	**Recent**
Company	Nelson	.28	-.33
	HRW	.53	.18

		Images	
		Year	
		Old	**Recent**
Company	Nelson	.24	-.06
	HRW	.59	.25

		Careers	
		Year	
		Old	**Recent**
Company	Nelson	.53	.49
	HRW	.81	.63

Table 5

Analysis of Variance for Proportion Difference Scores of Main Character Count

Source	DF	MS	F	P
Company	1	1.109	3.691	.064
Year	1	1.728	5.749	.023*
Interaction	1	.127	.424	.520
Residual	31	.301		

* $p < .05$

Based on the analysis of variance results to test Hypothesis 2(B) (see Table 6), the main effect for year indicated significant differences between the old and recent series for representation of male and female images, with the old reading series having significantly more male images than the recent series. There was a significant main effect for company indicating that HRW had significantly more male than female images when compared to Nelson.

Results of the analysis of variance to test Hypothesis 2(C) indicated no significant differences between the old and recent series, or between companies, for the depiction of male and female careers (see Table 7). All series portrayed males and females in mother and father roles, with unmentioned occupations as shown in Table 8.

Although the main interest was male vs. female representation, the count in each category included an "Other" or "Neutral" classification, as mentioned in the method section. The breakdown of the total count inclusive of this classification is presented in Table 9.

Role Behavior

As an exploratory consideration to extend the focus of this research, the role behavior of main characters was examined. Counts were taken of male and female main character's role behavior in the categories of: traditional, non-traditional, mixed, neutral and other. Proportions were calculated for the representation of each category in each reading series (see Table 10).

Because of interest in a comparative perspective the porportions of male and female identifiable role behavior in each category were specifically examined (see Table 11).

Table 6

Analysis of Variance for Proportion Difference Scores of Image Count

Source	DF	MS	F	P
Company	1	.920	7.245	.011*
Year	1	.863	6.795	.014*
Interaction	1	.000	.001	.979
Residual	31	.127		

* $p < .05$

Table 7

Analysis of Variance for Proportion Difference Scores of Career Count

Source	DF	MS	F	P
Company	1	.332	3.237	.082
Year	1	.099	.966	.333
Interaction	1	.038	.374	.546
Residual	31	.103		

* $p < .05$

Table 8

Total Number (#) and Proportion (P) of Mother/Father Roles with Unmentioned Occupations Per Series

Reading Series	Father		Mother	
	#	P	#	P
Nelson - Old	39	.433	51	.567
- Recent	24	.421	33	.579
HRW - Old	20	.370	34	.630
- Recent	9	.273	24	.727

Table 9

Total Number (#) and Proportion (P) of Main Characters, Images and Careers Per Series, Including "Other/Neutral" Category

Main Characters

Reading Series	Males		Females		Other	
	#	P	#	P	#	P
Nelson - Old	105	.335	56	.179	152	.486
- Recent	24	.286	42	.5	18	.214
HRW - Old	167	.361	43	.093	252	.545
- Recent	67	.364	44	.239	73	.397

Images

Reading Series	Males		Females		Mixed/Other	
	#	P	#	P	#	P
Nelson - Old	16438	.562	8465	.289	4365	.149
- Recent	4276	.392	5418	.496	1228	.112
HRW - Old	13005	.653	3294	.165	3605	.187
- Recent	4948	.555	2773	.311	1196	.134

Careers

Reading Series	Males		Females		Neutral	
	#	P	#	P	#	P
Nelson - Old	242	.667	55	.152	66	.182
- Recent	76	.685	22	.198	13	.117
HRW - Old	159	.740	17	.079	39	.181
- Recent	65	.663	18	.184	15	.153

Table 10

Proportion of Main Character's Role Behavior in the Categories of Traditional, Nontraditional, Mixed, Neutral and Other

		Role Behavior					
Reading Series		**T**	**NT**	**M**	**N**	**O***	**Total****
Nelson	- Old	.26	.4	.8	.10	.52	n = 313
	- Recent	.44	.13	.12	.10	.21	n = 84
HRW	- Old	.29	.2	.3	.12	.55	n = 462
	- Recent	.20	.10	.4	.26	.40	n = 184
	Total	.28	.5	.5	.13	.49	n = 1048

* Note 1 - The other category includes stories with: 1) no obvious main character, ie. an inanimate object or abstract concept was featured, 2) more than two major characters, 3) a gender-ambiguous main character or, 4) a role-behaviour ambiguous main character.

** Note 2 - Total (n) refers to the number of times a story was rated as 1) having one or two male and/or female main character(s), or 2) belonging in the other category (see Note 1).

Table 11

Proportion of Identifiable* Role Behavior for Male and Female Main Characters Per Series

Males

Reading Series	T	NT	M	N	Total
Nelson - Old	.60	.3	.12	.25	n = 103
- Recent	.75	.13	.4	.8	n = 24
HRW - Old	.60	.5	.5	.30	n = 167
- Recent	.33	.15	.7	.45	n = 67
Total	.56	.7	.7	.30	n = 361

Females

Reading Series	T	NT	M	N	Total
Nelson - Old	.42	.23	.25	.10	n = 48
- Recent	.45	.19	.22	.14	n = 42
HRW - Old	.79	.5	.8	.14	n = 39
- Recent	.38	.19	.5	.38	n = 42
Total	.50	.17	.15	.18	n = 171

* Ambiguous role behavior of characters was counted as other (as mentioned in the Method Section).

Reliability

Inter-rater reliability for the counts of (A) main characters, (B) images, and (C) careers was ascertained by having four additional coders analyze a selection of 12 stories according to the researcher's coding scheme. An inter-rater reliability range of r=.80-.100 was reported (see Table 12).

Table 12

Total Inter-Rater Agreement of Counts for Main Characters, Images, Careers and Role Behavior

Main Characters

Male main characters	.95		
Female main characters	.100	All main characters	.98
Other main characters	.100		

Images

Male images	.77		
Female images	.80	All images	.80
Other images	.83		

Careers

Male careers	.100*		
Female careers	.100*	All careers	.100
Neutral careers	.100		

Role Behavior

Traditional males	.100	Traditional females	.100		
Non-trad. males	.100*	Non-trad. females	.100	All role behavior	.98
Mixed males	.100*	Mixed females*	.100		
Neutral males	.95	Neutral females*	.100		
		Other role behavior	.100		

* Zero observations in these subcategories led to inflated reliability.

CHAPTER 6

DISCUSSION, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND SUMMARY

The focus of this research was to investigate the issue of sexism in specific basal readers used in Alberta. The results of this study have indicated that sexism in terms of unequal quantitative representation exists in some major basal readers which are in current use. The research findings also suggest that some recent reading series show a significant increase in female representation in main characters and images as compared to older series produced by the same publisher.

Although past research has shown unequal representation of males and females, several studies have indicated a progression towards a more balanced depiction in children's reading materials, and more specifically basal readers, (Scott, 1981; Fried, 1982; Britton et al., 1984; Garrity, 1987), and only one study has shown near equality (Rupley et al., 1981). Rupley et al. (1981) conducted a comparative analysis of 1976 and 1978 readers from different publishers. These researchers found that male major characters outnumbered females two to one in 1976 readers, whereas in different series published only two years later male and female main characters were depicted in almost equal numbers. Rupley et al. reported "a trend toward equalization is apparent. That is, there has been an attempt by publishers to portray males and females equally in story content" (p. 789). Other researchers who examined old and new editions of the same reading series were able to provide stronger evidence (in the form of a publisher effect) for their conclusions that progress has been made in the struggle against gender inequality (Fried, 1982; Britton et al., 1984; Garrity, 1987).

The present study took the above factors into account when deriving its hypotheses. In comparatively analyzing old and recent books from the same publishers with a seven to 17 year difference in publication dates, it was felt this research would

warrant similar results as were found in past studies. A significant difference in the amount of inequality shown for the depiction of main characters and images was found between the recent and older series. Since the present study examined changing trends across time with the Nelson and HRW publications, it can be stated that both publishers have progressed over time, in fact, Nelson actually demonstrated an overcompensation in its representation of females in two categories, namely main characters and images (Table 3). The recent Nelson series contained a greater proportion of female main characters and images than it did males. It could be that Nelson, in response to the outcry for gender equality, has actually gone overboard in ensuring that females were depicted in equal numbers. Unfortunately, this concern for a balanced representation of the sexes does not extend into the career role category where the proportion of female careers was about the same in both the recent (.257) and older (.235) series. It is regrettable that the important area of careers was seemingly ignored by both publishers as there was no significant difference found between the old and recent series in this category for either HRW or Nelson.

The common base for this and other related studies is that all researchers seem to view books as socializing influences on children, particularly on their perceptions of sex roles. Books provide " the child with role models toward whose likeness the child might strive" and may induce "the child in subtle ways to accept the role prohibitions and prescriptions set forth in the text" (Brook-Gunn & Matthews, 1979, p. 188). In children's textbooks very often the whole male/female world is portrayed to the child unrealistically. The quality of unrealistic representation has been revealed by several studies. The present study has demonstrated how some current readers are underrepresenting females in two major areas. It is well known that females comprise approximately 51% of our population (Fried, 1982; Michel, 1986), therefore, they should be equally represented in main character roles, illustrations and images of readers. The findings of this study show that in one current and popular reading series this presently is

not the case as in some instances males outnumber females by as much as 1.8:1. Another area of unrealistic portrayals involves the proportions of women depicted in the labour force. As mentioned previously, in 1985 Statistics Canada reported that 58% men and 42% women comprised the labour force in Canada (and 1981 Statistics reported 59% men and 41% women). This actual difference is a ratio of approximately 1.5 working men to 1 working woman. All of the analyzed readers show an untrue representation with both recent series portraying males in 3.5 to 3.6 times as many career roles than females. While women were underrepresented between 16 and 22%, men were overrepresented by 16-22% in the two recent series.

All examined series depicted males and females in mother and father roles, with unmentioned occupations. Three of the four series examined portrayed females in a mother role approximately one and a half times as often as they did males in a father role. The recent HRW series, however, showed mothers 2.7 times as often as fathers (unmentioned occupations). It appears both recent series have not progressed over time in terms of presenting a more realistic view of males and females in career roles as well as mother/father roles.

An examination of the proportions of the other and neutral categories (Table 9) indicates an apparent trend by both publishers to decrease the amount of main characters, images and careers which belong in such a classification. These findings differ from previous results which showed an increase in the proportion of stories without main characters or whose central characters were of undefined gender (Rupley et al., 1981; Scott, 1981). A possible explanation for the different findings may be that publishers have recently made a sincere effort to respond to the demand for equalization rather than avoid the issue by presenting several stories with many main characters, no main characters or a gender-ambiguous main character/career role.

The role behavior analysis (Table 10) indicates that over all four series main characters were portrayed in traditional roles in greater proportions than in non-traditional,

mixed or neutral roles. An inspection of the proportions of main character's role behavior (Table 10) reveals that the other category has decreased over time, suggesting once again that the publishers may be addressing the issue of sexism more than they were previously. On the other hand, over all four series the "other" category (.49) is definitely predominant over the remaining four classifications which range from .5 to .28.

The comparative results (Table 11) reveal that across all examined series both male and female main characters were far more likely to be depicted in a stereotypical role than any other, as half or more of all main characters were in the traditional category. The next most frequent role depiction for main characters was "neutral", particularly males. This may indicate that writers or publishers may be reluctant to portray males in a nonstereotypical role.

Much past research has suggested that story characters have demonstrated sex stereotyped activities (Graebner, 1972; Women on Words and Images, 1975; The Kalamazoo Committee, 1973; Marten & Matlin, 1976; Scott, 1980a, 1981, 1982; Michel, 1986; Batcher et al. 1987). A few studies stated that although characters displayed both traditional and nontraditional behaviors, males and females were primarily portrayed in restricted stereotyped roles (Engel, 1981; Collins et al, 1984; Heintz, 1987).

The present study's role behavior results (Table 10), though not confirmed by statistical significance, show an apparent trend by one of the publishers to progress in this area of sexism, while the other company has not. The recent HRW series contained a smaller proportion of traditional main characters and a larger proportion of nontraditional and neutral main characters than their older series. The recent series characters were more balanced in terms of traditional (.20) and nontraditional (.10) roles. The other publisher, Nelson, has increased their proportion of traditional and nontraditional main characters. The character's roles were not very balanced as the traditional category (.44) was much larger than the nontraditional classification (.13).

An examination of the comparative results (Table 11) reveals that for both sexes the recent HRW series has apparently reduced sexism by depicting fewer traditional male main characters (.33) than in the older series (.60) as well as proportionately less traditional female main characters (.38) than the older edition (.79). The recent HRW series has also increased it's proportion of nontraditional roles for both males (.15) and females (.19) when compared to the older series which contained a small proportion of nontraditional characters (.5) for each sex. The balance between the sexes for the main character's nontraditional role behavior was nearly equal in the recent HRW series.

In summary, based on the face value of the proportions in Tables 10 and 11, one could speculate that the two publishers are addressing the issue of sexism in different ways. Although both companies have increased their quantitative representation of females in two categories, Nelson has gone beyond HRW in depicting even a greater proportion of females than males in some instances. Even though Nelson has improved in quantity, they have not improved in quality as demonstrated by the role behavior analysis. On the other hand, HRW appears to have placed a great effort in improving the quality of their readers by depicting more males and females nontraditionally and less of them stereotypically. It can be speculated that the two publishers are attending primarily to one area instead of to both important areas of their readers -- the quantitative and qualitative representation of the characters. A request was made to each publishing company for a copy of the guidelines used in developing elementary school readers. Both companies are aware of the importance of addressing various biases as each indicated a provincial government publication as the criteria followed. HRW uses an Ontario Ministry of Education publication entitled "Race, Religion, and Culture" which, although it does attend to bias and discrimination, makes no specific mention of sexism. Nelson, on the other hand, follows the "Circular 14 Text/Kit Evaluation for Bias" (by the Ontario Ministry of Education) which offers somewhat vague and general guidelines, however it does address sex stereotyping as a specific issue.

In focusing on the portrayal of male main characters in children's readers, previous research has indicated that books have continued to depict stereotypical male characters, whereas females have increasingly been shown in nontraditional roles (Scott, 1980, 1981). The examples provided below demonstrate a nonsexist or nontraditional male main character and a sexist or traditional male role, respectively. 1)" 'I'm knocking, Sam!' he yelled. Boy, I jumped right up from the table and went grinning and hugged Jacob, and he grinned and hugged me too." (Clifton, 1984, p. 203-204). 2) " 'Hag wife, Hag wife, bring me my bones!' 'They are not done,' the old hag moans. 'Not done? not done?' the giant roars and heaves his old wife out of doors." (Reeves, 1972, p. 132-133).

The present study indicates that although improvements have been noted for both genders for one publisher, overall four series males and females were primarily portrayed in traditional, stereotyped roles. Scott's (1981) comments regarding the issue of male sexism are still pertinent today. Scott stated that although the emphasis on the roles of females has produced more stories about nonstereotyped female characters, the need to change the stereotyped portrayals of males has not yet been adequately dealt with.

Over the past 15-20 years there has been a continuum of research conducted regarding sexism in children's reading materials. The present study is part of this continuum of research which has been an effort to continuously analyze children's books to track important changes and advances made by writers and publishers over the years. Research over the last decade has shown a trend toward a more balanced and equitable quantitative representation of males and females as well as a less stereotypical qualitative representation of females in children's books. The current study has confirmed past research by demonstrating a progression toward equalization, and it has added important information as well as improvements to methodology used in this area of research.

By analyzing old and recent reading series from the same publishers, this study was able to account for trends across time, whereas much prior research on text books has been cross-sectional. The present study responded to criticisms made about previous research by improving and expanding past methodologies which included following Holsti's (1969) recommendations for a well structured content analysis design in order to make replication and comparison of the research easier.

This study was limited in its examination of the "other" category by excluding it from the statistical analysis as the researcher chose to focus on the male/female comparison. It would be useful if future research investigated the "other" category further by breaking it down and examining more specific parts of this classification statistically.

A recommendation for future researchers regarding character analysis would be to extend the initial exploratory examination of the present study by statistically analyzing results gathered from old and recent series to determine if the apparent equalization trend is significant. Further research is necessary in the entire area of sexism in children's books to continuously trace the evolution of reading series and the changes they make.

Several recommendations can be made to the creators of children's reading materials (publishers, writers, illustrators, editors, etc.) as well as to the people who use them - school administrators, teachers and parents. Textbook writers need to portray realistic numbers of male and female characters and careers as well as a balance of stereotyped and nonstereotyped roles. Publishers need to carefully examine their story selections to ensure they obtain nonsexist materials. It is recommended that school administrators arrange workshops and inservices for their teaching staff to inform them of the importance of this issue and encourage them to develop programs which make reduction of sexism a priority. Educators and caregivers of children can seek out nonsexist books without condemning other high calibre books that portray traditional characters, for instance "Snow White". Our goal should be to supplement rather than replace such resources with other high quality books that project our society's growing awareness and

changing values. Schulwitz (1976) and Engel (1981) have suggested that teachers can counteract the effect of sexist reading materials by: 1) Examining readers thoroughly before using them; 2) Discussing certain scenarios presented in books to change attitudes as one teaches. For instance, when reading "Snow White" the cleaning behaviors of Snow White could be discussed. It could be pointed out that all people, boys and men included, need to learn to clean up after themselves, not just females; 3) Modifying the story after reading it. For example, discussing how the story might go if Snow White was a man and the seven dwarves were females; 4) Encouraging critical thinking abilities. For instance, if a character said "Boys are braver than girls", the trait of bravery could be discussed as well as individual differences as opposed to gender differences; 5) Not using extremely sexist materials, but making use of other resources available such as library books, book clubs, materials from specialists, etc.

The issue of sexism and sex role stereotyping is an important one for therapists and psychologists because of the social problems which have been connected to sexism, as discussed in the literature review. It is well known that many clients seek therapy for such issues as: self-esteem, stress, relationship conflicts, sexual harassment, etc. as well as extreme situations such as rape, sexual abuse and wife battering. Sexism has been viewed as a significant contributing factor to the above problems, as well as an important issue in the prevention and treatment of such situations.

Society, in particular psychologists and therapists, must attempt to achieve equal power relationships between women and men to deal with the issue of violence against women and children. Models of psychotherapy need to include an examination of sociocultural factors such as gender inequality and sex role conditioning (Walker, 1979; Bograd, 1984).

Research regarding general sex role issues has found that nonsex-typed patterns may be related to psychological advantages in both females and males. Androgynous individuals have a broader repertoire of behaviors, are able to combine and integrate

masculine and feminine characteristics and are also able to respond flexibly according to the situation. However, society's cultural expectations and values regarding appropriate behavior for women and men affect the possibility of effectively expressing androgynous characteristics (Kaplan & Sedney, 1980). Maccoby (1977) stated that it is possible to change these stereotypes within the limits set for us by biology, which are not very narrow. People who concentrate on changing the stereotypes in the mass media, in television and in textbooks are acting in the right direction, according to Maccoby. "If we do want social change in sex roles it's the stereotype we must change first and the other things, the differential socialization patterns and so on, will fall in place behind these" (Maccoby, 1977, p. 16).

In conclusion, the present study demonstrated that sexism in the form of quantitative representation was evident in some major basal reading series used in Alberta. This inadequate and unrealistic representation existed in the portrayals of main characters, images, and careers. Michel (1986) described this type of sexism as latent, or implicit, as opposed to explicit sexism which occurs when males and females are depicted "exclusively in fixed stereotypical conventional roles, without taking into account the diversity to be found in the real world" (p. 49). In comparison, Michel says "implicit, or latent sexism (occurs) when these texts describe a real society where women and girls are treated as inferior to men and boys..." Women's "underrepresentation in, books and textbooks is a clear indication of the inferior position to which women are relegated in society, and helps to aggravate the situation still further" (p. 49).

The present study also indicated that the readers' main characters were primarily portrayed in traditional, stereotypical roles. Since children emulate and identify with such role models, they may be learning attitudes and values that are restricting their role behavior and inhibiting their social and emotional development.

On the positive side, it was shown that the publishers did make attempts to present a more equal portrayal of male and female main characters and images in their recent

series. It was also speculated that one publisher appeared to depict the behavior and activities of main characters less stereotypically over time.

Although a movement toward equalization is occurring in children's reading materials, unfortunately that representation is still not realistic in certain areas. Tibbett's (1979b) comment from the past is applicable still today:

> It is unfortunate that, where book companies have gone to the trouble to alter the contents of their texts to reduce sexism, their efforts have not gone far enough. Books are either sexist or not. There is no such thing as "a little bit sexist," and critics should not be placated because some reading materials appear to be "less sexist" than before. No degree of inequality is acceptable (p. 7).

Since basal texts used in schools are mandated by the system it is particularly important that authors and publishers of elementary readers be aware of all forms of sex role stereotyping, explicit and subtle.

> If schools are to develop the full potential of all children, textbooks must strive to portray people more realistically. Elimination of sex bias in elementary reading textbooks will be one step toward the freeing of children from the abuses of sex discrimination (Fried, 1982, p. 35).

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APPENDIX A

Scoring Example; Giant Thunder by James Reeves, Sounds of Language; Holt, Rinehart & Winston.

"Giant Thunder", a poem by James Reeves (Sounds of Mystery, 1972, p. 132-133)

All: Giant Thunder striding home wonders if his supper's done.

Boys: 'Hag wife, Hag wife, bring me my bones!'

Girls: 'They are not done,' the old hag moans.

Boys: 'Not done? not done?' the giant roars and heaves his old wife out of doors Cries he, 'I'll have them, cooked or not' but overturned the cooking-pot.

All: He flings the burning coals about; see how the lightning flashes out! Upon the gale the old hag rides, the cloudy moon for terror hides. All the world with thunder quakes; forest shudders, mountain shakes; from the cloud the rainstorm breaks; every living creature wakes. Stamp no more from hill to hill - tomorrow you shall have your fill.

Coding

	MAIN CHARACTERS			CAREERS			IMAGES			
STORY	M	F	O	M	F	N		M	F	MS/0
Giant Thunder	1-Giant			0	0	0	Illust. Text	0 𝍸 𝍸 II	0 𝍸 I	0 IIII

ROLE BEHAVIOR

Trad.	Non-Trad.	Mixed	Neutral	Other
1 - male				

DETERMINING ROLE BEHAVIOR

Character	Trad.	Non-Trad.
Giant Thunder	Dominance I Agression III	

Total = 4

= 100% = Traditional